



UN High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals

Side Event on Local Poverty Reduction and MDG Localization - for scaling up implementation to achieve MDGs –

On 23 September a Partnership Event on Local Poverty Reduction and MDG Localization, organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), Action Aid, the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), and the Millennium Campaign, was held in New York with an attendance of 130 participants. The event aimed to share practical policy innovations amongst participants by highlighting challenges and key elements of success in scaling-up MDG localized interventions. Following are the key messages from this event.

Key Messages

Scaled up interventions to support National Development Strategies have not been widespread. Scaling up MDG implementation requires not only rigorous advocacy, but also political will and capacity development support at the local level. Experiences from the field suggest that the MDG agenda has not been adequately integrated into national level planning in a way that energizes accelerated country level action towards achieving the goals. There is a disconnection between the MDG framework heavily centered at the National Level and the lives of the poor in communities, further deepening the *national-local gap*.

At the mid-point for the achievement of the goals, MDGs will not be achieved if focus and attention remains at national level without increased concurrent focus towards local governments and non state players in implementation. Drawing from the lessons from the field, in order to accelerate attainment of MDGs WE NEED TO:

1. PROMOTE proactive South-South cooperation through the exchange of experiences and lessons learned on MDG localization and scaling up.
2. ALIGN the MDGs with public policy, working together from the top to the bottom and vice-versa. LOCALIZE the goals, with clear process on how to engage actors, and commitment to show results.

3. ENGAGE and sensitize the State, using community pressure for action and monitoring of results. PROMOTE capacity development to foster community action, mobilization and understanding of MDGs and how the goals related to peoples' livelihoods.
4. PROMOTE public-private partnerships as a model to achieve MDGs. ENCOURAGE better coordination and harmonization of development partners, including bilateral donors, in support of scaling up service delivery at local and national levels for MDGs.
5. INVOLVE people as development partners as opposed to beneficiaries. (The beneficiaries of MDGs should become agents). MDGs will only be attained with focused action at community level – this requires recognition of their needs, aspirations and initiatives. Community and village members have valuable tacit knowledge about what will and will not work – that can benefit development planning and implementation at all levels.
6. PROMOTE national-wide learning and engagement, which can be sustained through a national movement of citizenship and solidarity. This should be hinged by high level political will that allow legal and institutional transformation to achieve MDGs.
7. Effectively ENGAGE elected leaders as champions to achieve MDGs. Parliamentarians, local councilors/leaders, and private sector are important key actors in bridging the gap between national political processes and promote policy change.
8. EMPOWER local government organizations as key agents in delivering social services and in engaging local players to accelerate the achievement of MDGs. INCREASE investments of local service delivery systems, where the implementation takes place. REINFORCE an enabling institutional framework at the national level to support scaling up efforts at the local and district levels.
9. MAKE progress on gender equality as key element to achieve all MDGs. At the local level this must include measures such as building the capacity of governments to provide services and gather gender sensitive data, empower women's organizations, as well as promote women leaders and their engagement in planning and implementation of development plans.
10. ENSURE that human rights principles and obligations, which underline the MDGs, can provide a crucial tool for implementation at national and local levels, particularly with respect to non-discrimination and participation – with special attention to the most vulnerable.